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HOUSEHOLD CALENDAR

An interview between Miss Ruth Van Deman and Miss Mabel Stienbarger of the Bureau of Home Economics, delivered in the Department of Agriculture period of the National Farm and Home Hour, broadcast by a network of 48 associate NBC stations, Tuesday, June 7, 1932.

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MISS VAN DEMAN: How do you do, Everybody:

There are so many home canning questions coming into the Bureau of Home Economics these days that I have asked Miss Mabel Stienbarger from our food utilization section to come over here with me and answer a few of them on the air. Maybe we'll save you the bother of writing a letter. Any how we do recommend, with all emphasis, that before you start to can fruits and vegetables at home you obtain a reliable time table and temperature guide. Unfortunately not all time tables in circulation are reliable.

Now, today, we are going to answer questions about canning the early fruits and vegetables. Later in the summer we'll talk about peaches and pears and tomatoes and corn. Right now berries are coming. It's the height of the strawberry season in lots of places, and blackberries and raspberries are ripening fast.

Miss Stienbarger, what do you find the best way to can berries so that they won't separate from the sirup and float on top? I suppose this doesn't really effect the quality of the canned fruit, does it?

MISS STIENBARGER: No, when the fruit is turned to serve, you'll never know how the berries and the sirup were in the cans. But most of us want the satisfaction of putting up attractive looking jars. Also, there's a very practical point involved, that is to get all the fruit possible into each can.

Cooking shrinks berries. Fruit that fills a can when raw shrinks down about one-third or more when sterilized. Therefore, if you want full containers and want to keep the berries from floating, first heat them through with just enough sugar to make them taste good. Add only a very, very small quantity of water, just enough to keep them from scorching. Then pack the hot fruit into the hot containers, seal them up, and process for 5 minutes in a bath of boiling water. Or if you prefer, you can process glass jars of berries in the oven. But if you do process in the oven, seal the jars only partially, or the steam collecting inside will spoil the perfect seal.

These directions I've given apply to all berries. As a general thing, though, we don't recommend canning strawberries. They are much better as jam or preserves. As canned fruit they are rather watery.

MISS VAN DEMAN: Miss Stienbarger, may I put in a question here about tin cans? Is there a special kind for berries?

MISS STIENBARGER: Yes. If you are canning berries and other red acid fruits like cherries get the cans with a special enamel lining called R, or sanitary
(over)

enamel. If these red fruits are put into plain tin cans, there's a harmless chemical reaction that causes the fruit to lose its pretty red color. And by the way, the lining of these R sanitary enamel cans looks like bright gold. Don't confuse them with the enameled cans designated as C, which have a dull gold colored lining, and are used especially for canning such foods as sweet corn, green peas, and lima beans.

If you can red fruits in glass, keep the jars in the dark to prevent loss of color. Save the heavy paper cartons the jars come in, and store the canned fruit in them. Or if you keep your canned fruit on shelves in a cool, dry cellar, have a curtain of oil cloth to pull down and shut off the light. In other words, store all cans of red fruits in a cool, dark place.

MISS VAN DEMAN: Miss Stienbarger, I think you mentioned cherries just in passing. Are they canned in the same way as berries?

MISS STIENBARGER: Yes, cherries even the sweetest kinds, are classes as an acid fruit. They may be processed in the water bath, or the oven, or in a steamer without pressure.

We generally can the large sweet cherries seeds and all. With sour cherries we prefer to take the seeds out before canning. Sometimes we heat the sour cherries with sugar to taste in an open kettle, and pack them hot into the containers, and process as I've described for berries. Or sometimes we pack the fruit raw, and fill the containers up with hot sirup. Then we have to process much longer. If you are canning the sour cherries especially for pies next winter, use a medium, not a heavy sirup.

MISS VAN DEMAN: While we are still on fruits, Miss Stienbarger, what is your experience in canning them without sugar? Do they keep all right?

MISS STIENBARGER: Yes, indeed, fruits may be canned without sugar for use in special diets or for some particular purpose. Heat the fruit first, simply leaving out the sugar, and pack hot into hot containers, and process in the usual way. If you need more liquid to fill up the cans, use hot fruit juice. Sometimes you can get this juice from very ripe fruit, too ripe to can whole.

MISS VAN DEMAN: I know you haven't said all there is to say about fruits, but we must be getting on to the early vegetables. What are the main points about asparagus, and peas, and snap beans?

MISS STIENBARGER: Well, the one thing never to forget in canning asparagus, peas, snap beans, and all the other non-acid vegetables is that they need processing at a higher temperature than that of boiling water. We recommend processing asparagus, and peas and snap beans in the steam pressure canner at 240° F. That is 22° above the temperature of boiling water. The steam pressure method reduces the chances of spoilage. As an economy measure and as a safety measure, we recommend it.

And here again we use the hot pack. After you pick over and wash the vegetable, boil for a few minutes in water, and pack hot into the containers. Add salt and boiling liquid to fill. Then seal and process in the steam pressure canner. The exact time to process varies for different vegetables. The hot pack combines all the advantages of the open kettle method plus those of the cold pack.

MISS VAN DEMAN: Thank you, Miss Stienbarger, for giving us all these practical pointers on home canning. If anybody wants tables of times and temperatures, and exact directions, just write to the U.S. Bureau of Home Economics. We have a bulletin telling how to can all the usual fruits and vegetables. The supply for free distribution is exhausted just now, but a reprint is on the way, and we'll be able to send you copies in two or three weeks.

Now, next week, another old friend of yours will be here with me -- Mrs. Yeatman to talk about making jelly from summer fruits. Goodbye, for this time.

